Jerry White campaigns on Detroit campus

A reporter
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SEP US presidential candidate Jerry White campaigned on the campus of Wayne State University in Detroit this week in preparation for a public meeting being held Saturday, on "The Crisis in Detroit and the 2012 Elections." Representatives from the campus International Students for Social Equality (ISSE) campaigned with White, generating interest in the SEP program and signing up several students to join the ISSE.

White spoke to students and campus workers on the need to build an independent party of the working class as an alternative to both capitalist parties. He introduced himself to passersby as the socialist candidate for US president and warned that Obama's putting forward of Detroit as a model for America meant deeper attacks on workers and youth.

The campaign table had several statements published by the SEP as well as materials on the conditions particularly faced by young people—unemployment, future wars and debt.

Eric, a student who came up to the table, was attracted by the campaign materials. When White explained that the only alternative to deepening wars and growing inequality was socialist planning based on a rational utilization of the collective resources of mankind, Eric was enthusiastic about an alternative to what capitalism has done to Detroit. "To me, coming from ground zero, your explanation makes a lot of sense," he said. "I'll be looking carefully into your material."

An art student, Tori, waited for his turn to speak to White about his situation. "I'm going to Chicago to study media arts," he said. "I wanted to stay here in Detroit, but there's nothing here anymore, no jobs, no opportunities, nothing. The UAW has jobs and wages so low... They're not doing anything for workers.

"I don't like politicians, you know, Democrats and Republicans. I don't buy that someone is better only because he's a Democrat, or black for that matter.

"And as far as Detroit being a model, that's not a good model. I went to a public school! That's being wrecked. In Detroit, most of our money has been lost because of the people who are in control of it."

Peter Ochs studies political demography. He came to the table to speak to White about the SEP campaign. White described how the American political system is run by money and how the media marginalizes any candidate that doesn't have millions of dollars. He explained that the SEP is based in the working class on socialist policies. Peter expressed interest in finding out more and attending the Detroit meeting.

A student of history, Clayton Kendall, agreed with White on the historical character of the current crisis, but was interested as White explained the historical materialist method of analysis. "During the Depression, Franklin Roosevelt, one of the most astute capitalist politicians, created the largest program of job creation projects in history to avoid social revolution in America," White told him. "This period was within two decades of the Russian Revolution, where the working class took power for the first time ever."

When White explained that the orientation of the SEP was for the unity of all workers worldwide, Clayton said, "I agree. Nationalism died a long time ago. It's become its opposite. Nobody in any country cares about the workers except the workers."

A Pakistani student, Muhammad, pointed out the difficulty of the oppressed masses taking power, because the rulers in countries all over the world brutally repress any struggles that challenge their rule. White explained the class character of the parties which were responsible for the partition of India and how they were only interested in subordinating the masses under them. The task that the SEP sets itself is to build independent revolutionary leadership based on the working class in every country of the world, he added.

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Wayne State University is one of the most cosmopolitan campuses in America, with students attending from all over the world. The SEP election campaign addresses the conditions facing all students and workers. For more information and how to get involved visit socialequality.com.

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